Penalty Imposed on ONGC

310. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hazira-based ONGC has been heavily penalised by the Central Excise and Customs Deprtment recently; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (b) The collector of Customs and Central Excise, Baroda vide his order dated 17-12-91 has imposed a penalty of Rs. 75 lakhs on ONGC, Hazira project for not following the prescribed Central Excise procedure. An appeal is being preferred against the order.

Offer by British Gas

311. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report pulished in the Indian Express dated the 11th February, 1992 under the heading "British Gas keen to enter India in a big way";

(b) if so, whether Government have received any proposals from the British Gas Compay for becoming a partner in the joint venture with Gas Authority of India Ltd. for the implementation of the Bombay City Gas Distribution Project and ONGC for the development of existing oil and gas discoveries;

(c) if so, what are the details of the proposals;

(d) whether Government have examined the proposals;

(e) if so, with what results: and

(f) whether Government propose to enlist cooperation of the Multi National Compnay for distant areas like Tripura etc. for exploring Natural Gas?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) GAIL has received proposals from several companies, including British Gas for joint venture for the implementation of the Bombay City Gas Distribution Project and is appraising the relative merits of these proposals. No proposal has yet been received from British Gas for a joint venture with ONGC for development of existing oil and gas discoveries.

(f) Two blocks in Mizoram and Cachar in the North-Eastern region of the country are included in the 72 blocks offered to indian and Foreign companies for exploration for oil and gas under the Fourth Round of bidding.

Oil Import Bill

312. SHRI DULESHWAR MEENA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether India's oil import bill for the current year is expected to increase by hundreds of crores of rupees as compared to that of the preceding year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the estimated amount of the Oil Import Bill for 1991-92 alongwith the names of the countries from which imports are likely to be made and at what price ; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to meet the alarming situation ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) to (c) The reasons for increase in oil import bill are increase in the volumes of import and exchange rate adjustment. The oil import bill for 1991-92 is likely to be more than Rs. 12,000 crores. Oil imports are done both under term contracts and through spot purchases. Spot purchases are not always relatable to specific countries. Efforts are being made to maximise the indigenous production.

LPG Connections

313. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM and NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 2964 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 18th December, 1991 and state :

(a) the names of MPs on whose recommendations the LPG connection were allotted alongwith the number of connections in each case during the year 1991 and whether the MPs were informed to this effect ;

(b) the number of complaints received from the MPs for non-allotment of LPG connections against their quota ;

(c) what action Government have taken on such complaints ;

(d) whether it is a fact that the list of LPG connections allotted against their quota were not supplied to MPs ; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) to (e) Priority LPG connections are given on the recommendations of all MPs. Whenever any complaint is received from a Member of Parliament efforts are made to attend to them promptly. In the past few months Members have been informed from time to time of the connections released against their recommendations.

Production of Petrol

314. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the country has attained the stage of self-sufficiency in the production of petrol ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the country is not importing petrol any more; and

(c) what is the annual requirement of petrol in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) and (b) Currently no import of petrol (motor spirit) is taking place.

(c) The estimated requirement of petrol (Motor sprit) for the year 1991-92 is 3655 TMT.

Supply of Gas to Gujarat

315. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Gujarat has requested the Centre to allocate natural gas in sufficient quantities for various projects of power generation, industrial as well as of domestic use ;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto ;

(c) whether Government propose to stop flaring of surplus gas at Bombay High and make best use of gas production capacity of South Basin so that it could be transported to pipavav where high priority users are available ; and

(d) whether Government propose to bring Bombay High gas to Pipavav with a view to saving new investment of Rs. 900 crores in Tapti field development by way of utilising a large amount of associated gas which is being flared ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The entire gas being produced in Gujarat, along with substantial quantities of Off-shore gas, have already been committed to various consumers in Gujarat. Further, allocation would depend on various factors including production and availability of gas.

(c) and (d) While measures are being taken to stop the flaring of natural gas in the western off-shore, there is no proposal to bring this gas to Pipavav.

Development of Oil Fields by Private Parties

316. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to states

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to hand over two oil fields to certain private parties for development;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and the decision Government have taken thereon ; and

(c) the conditions laid down for the development of these oil fields ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) to (c) One discovered oilfield has been offered as part of a block in the Cauvery off-shore basin in the Fourth Round of Bidding for exploration for oil and natural gas in India. The contract to be signed with the party awarded the block would be on a production-sharing basis. The last date for receipt of bids is 15th April, 1992.

Production of Crude

317. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the production of crude oil in the country is likely to fall by 1 million